

## THE CONTACTS OF CIVILIZATIONS

The Indo-Chinese press is tri-lingual. The language of China serves as a medium for Annamite scholars, and naturally, also for the many Chinese living in the colony. It is not openly political, but bitter experience has made the government exercise a severe if not wholly effective censorship. Papers in *quoc ngu* have begun to appear in rears<sup>1</sup>, but the French press is by far the most important. More than three hundred papers appear in that language for the small public which the colony boasts. Pham Quynh's *Nam* embodies in a periodical the colony's three journalistic languages, and

this helps to bridge the cultural gaps between the three countries.

In 1898 Doumer, characteristically, wanted to restrain the growth of the Indo-Chinese press. He encountered little resistance

the few papers then extant. Doumer obtained powers for

the Governor-General, by playing up the current Chinese unrest\* in a statement that a simple edict could suspend a paper's publication. Unlike the French press, where the state's hand is stayed until after the fact, the methods in Indo-China are rather preventive, in that they require preliminary authorization to publish. The violence of the colony's *km* provoked an endless series of decrees of such complexity that the Minister of the Colonies, in 1927, felt compelled to put an end to this journalistic chaos.

The juridical regime to which the colony's press is characterized by such confusion that laws not only apply to another, but within the country to the publication. Cochin-China's position is the clean-cut, **ii**

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